

TRIBUTE TO JEFF KIGHTLINGER

• Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, I rise today to honor the long career of public service provided to the people of Southern California by Jeffery Kightlinger, general manager of the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California, who is retiring after a 15-year tenure.

I would like to take a few moments to reflect on what an extraordinary leader Jeff has been not just for Southern California but for the whole State. Like Jeff, I care deeply about our water future. For years I have turned to him for his always wise counsel on how to solve the next challenge. Over these many years, I have come to view Jeff as a friend and to value our friendship. I have also learned to value equally his leadership abilities.

The treacherous politics of California water and the immense obstacles to getting anything done are legendary, but Jeff has always been up to the task. Jeff is not only one of the smartest people I know, but he has unparalleled ability to strategize how to approach a complex water negotiation. He has built deep and trusting relationships with many of the key players, not only in California but throughout the Colorado River Basin. Knowing the other parties as well as he does, Jeff is able to map out where there is the possibility of an agreement. He then is able to work steadily and patiently over months and years, gradually removing the obstacles until the parties can finally come together.

Many of Jeff's greatest accomplishments have come in guiding major changes within the Colorado River Basin, helping to collaboratively negotiate landmark pacts among a truce among 7 States, two countries, and 10 Native American tribes. These include the Quantification Settlement Agreement, the Lower Colorado River Multi-Species Conservation Program, significant revisions to the U.S.-Mexico water treaty, innovative storage programs in Lake Mead, and the Colorado River Drought Contingency Plan. This has laid a solid foundation for longer term solutions to be negotiated over the next several years. Jeff has helped forge Metropolitan's partnerships with agricultural districts that have replaced litigation with cooperation.

If you evaluate a leader by the results they accomplish, what Jeff has achieved in preparing Southern California for drought is extraordinary. In a time when much of the California and the West is desperate for water, Southern California stands out for how well it is prepared. Millions of acre feet of water in storage ensures that the region can weather this drought even if it lasts for several more years.

It took a whole suite of actions for Jeff and Metropolitan to get to this place. Knowing that the climate is changing and droughts will worsen, Metropolitan has invested, planned, and prepared, resulting in record water storage, reduced water usage in the re-

gion, and unprecedented drought resiliency. This didn't happen by itself. Metropolitan's conservation programs, including \$350 million in turf removal incentives, transformed the Southern California landscape as Southern Californians embraced conservation as a way of life and permanently lowered water demands. Metropolitan has also launched the Regional Recycled Water Program Advanced Purification Center, a 500,000-gallon-per-day demonstration facility that could ultimately serve as one of the largest recycled water projects in the Nation.

Under Jeff's leadership, Metropolitan weathered the great recession and stabilized its finances while investing billions in restoring its aging conveyance system and improving its water treatment methods, setting a national example for how an agency can meet its infrastructure challenges. His record of environmental stewardship includes installing solar power at Metropolitan's water treatment plants and leading the organization's first efforts to address climate change. Through apprenticeships, recruitment, and promotions, Metropolitan was able to transfer the specialized knowledge of graying workforce to a new, diverse generation of water leaders.

No history of 21st century water in California and the West would be complete without acknowledging his contributions. Jeff has been an invaluable resource to myself, my staff, and those of numerous other Members with his expert analysis and advice that has informed our legislative work. His knowledge and counsel will be greatly missed. I ask our colleagues to join me in congratulating Jeff Kightlinger on his retirement and thanking him for his long career of public service to the people of Southern California.●

RECOGNIZING RUSTIC ROOTS ON SECOND

• Mr. PAUL. Mr. President, as ranking member of the Senate Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship, each week I will recognize an outstanding Kentucky small business that exemplifies the American entrepreneurial spirit. This week, it is my privilege to recognize a woman-owned small business, Rustic Roots on Second of Pikeville, KY, as the Senate Small Business of the Week.

Located in downtown Pikeville, Rustic Roots on Second opened its doors in 2015. After graduating from the University of Kentucky, founder and owner, Maura Minix, wanted to provide a place for Kentucky artisans to showcase and sell their work. Maura, who grew up in Prestonsburg, KY, saw an opportunity to set up a shop in neighboring Pikeville. She established Rustic Roots on Second, providing a retail outlet for Kentuckian and Appalachian artisans.

Today, Rustic Roots on Second continues supporting and promoting small businesses and artisans in eastern Kentucky. Over 30 local vendors sell their

goods at the store, ranging from food and textile goods to artwork and furniture made from used bourbon barrels. Maura's mother, Brenda Minix, is a key part of the operation, working as store manager and serving as the "face" of the business around town. Customers are regularly greeted by name and treated according to the golden rule. Rustic Roots on Second also serves as an event venue, renting out its shop for celebrations, fundraisers, and business events. The store works with local artisans to host classes and workshops, rotating offerings to meet community interest. From painting to dulcimer playing, teaching and celebrating the arts is a priority.

Notably, Rustic Roots on Second is a leader in downtown Pikeville's business community. They regularly participate in local and regional events, including the Appalachian Vintage Street Market, Wine-Tasting & Retailgating, and Pikeville's famous Hillbilly Days festival. Rustic Roots on Second is a member of the Southeast Kentucky Chamber of Commerce and is involved with Shaping Our Appalachian Region—SOAR—Kentucky, which fosters entrepreneurship and innovation in the region. They are committed to revitalizing and promoting downtown Pikeville through their support of the Pikeville Main Street Program, Inc.

Like many small businesses, Rustic Roots on Second actively supports charitable and civic organizations. For several years, Maura and Brenda have teamed up with local businesses to host picnics and decorate their storefronts to thank police officers, firefighters, and first responders for their service. They regularly support fundraisers for clubs, churches, and sports teams and have sponsored silent auctions to benefit local schools. Rustic Roots on Second's advocacy and community leadership has been recognized in local and regional publications.

When the COVID-19 pandemic occurred, Pikeville rallied together to support Rustic Roots on Second. As a nonessential business, Rustic Roots on Second was impacted by the lockdowns. Maura and Brenda adapted, overhauling and expanding their online store to continue serving customers nationwide. As Kentucky reopened, Maura and Brenda worked with local small businesses to ensure downtown Pikeville reopened safely, welcoming locals and visitors alike to their vibrant community.

Rustic Roots on Second is an outstanding example of the critical role small businesses play in uplifting and advocating for their communities. Congratulations to Maura, Brenda, and the entire team at Rustic Roots on Second. I wish them the best of luck and look forward to watching their continued growth and success in Kentucky.●

TRIBUTE TO JASON SUSLAVICH

• Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. President, I would like recognize an important

member of my staff, my former director of national security policy, Jason Suslavich. I, along with the rest of my team was saddened to have Jason leave our office this February.

While born in Winchester, MA, Jason was quick to embrace the Alaskan spirit. Up north, Jason traded his beach walks for hikes and his golf clubs for a fishing rod. Like a true Alaskan, he loved his wild Alaska seafood and overall good cooking and could talk for hours about his favorite dishes at his favorite restaurants throughout the State. One of his favorites was the osso bucco at Orso—and could speak tirelessly about it. And did.

In high school, Jason was the all-State wrestling champion and was inducted into the National Wrestling Hall of Fame. His dedication and tenacity expanded beyond the wrestling mat into his academics. At John Hopkins University, Jason majored in international studies, which he has applied throughout his career.

Jason's work in Alaska politics began over a decade ago in Congressman Don Young's office. As the Congressman's legislative assistant, Jason laid the foundation for his career in the Senate, building productive coalitions and facilitating bipartisan collaboration.

One year into my first term, Jason joined our office. At this time, I was still learning the ropes in the Senate. His work ethic, experience, and dependability made my life a lot easier and made him an irreplaceable asset to my team.

Jason was good-natured, a team player, and a legendary prankster. From day-to-day tricks to years-long plots, Jason was committed to the craft of mischief—just ask his nemesis, Mike Anderson.

Jason's contributions to our office—and to the State of Alaska, particularly building on our three pillars of military might—were enormous. His leadership lives on with Team Sullivan. He is greatly missed.

If this past year has taught us anything, it is the importance of trusting our intuition. After 13 years working for Alaska's delegation, Jason has decided to chart a new journey—working in the aerospace sector. He has loved space since he was a child. In this next chapter, Jason can dedicate time to his great passions: space exploration, the strength of our Nation, the Boston Red Sox, and most importantly, his beautiful and brilliant wife Sarah.

Jason may not be working in my office, but he will always have a home in the Last Frontier. His dedication to the State has forever solidified him as a welcome friend and honorary Alaskan.

Please join me in wishing Jason much success and happiness in the future.●

● Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I rise today in appreciation of a lifelong Rhode Islander and a healthcare trailblazer, Dr. Al Puerini. We wish him well in the next chapter of life.

Al Puerini was born, raised, and trained in Rhode Island. After graduating from his beloved Providence College and training in family medicine at Brown University, Al began his practice in Cranston, RI, in the early eighties. He excelled in his work. He soon began teaching family medicine at Brown's Warren Alpert School of Medicine and was elected a fellow at the American Academy of Family Physicians.

But his revolutionary work began in the mid-1990s, when Al helped to found and then lead the Rhode Island Primary Care Physicians Corporation as it embarked on an important mission: to reimagine the way we deliver healthcare. Al and his RIPCPC colleagues combined the talents of over 150 primary care physicians and over 200 specialists and negotiated new contracts with local health insurers. Instead of following the fee-for-service treadmill that encourages doctors to shuffle as many people through their offices as possible, these new contracts rewarded providers for the health of their patients. They also aimed to increase collaboration and communication among specialists, providers, and hospitals to improve health outcomes.

As these contracts proved effective, Al and his board decided to think bigger. In 2014, they joined with Care New England to help form Integra Community Care Network, the largest accountable care organization, ACO, in Rhode Island. The Affordable Care Act's accountable care organizations take the principle Al had pursued for years—paying providers based on the health of their patients—and put it to use in the Medicare Program. At Integra, primary care providers, hospitals, specialists, extended care providers, and others all work together to achieve more coordinated, accountable care. As someone who fought for ACOs in the ACA, I was thrilled to see Rhode Islanders step up to that challenge.

Integra now serves more than 1 in 10 patients in Rhode Island. It has been a national success. Beyond Medicare patients, it works with major private insurers and Medicaid. It has earned a 95-percent quality rating from the Federal Government and saved over \$20 million in healthcare costs since 2015. Integra now stands a model for ACOs across the country.

Even as he built a new national model of care, Al never stopped serving his patients, his community, and his beloved alma mater, Providence College. He maintained his Cranston private practice for over three decades. He was recognized as Rhode Island's "Top Doc" twice over that span. He was named a Rhode Island Academy of Family Physicians Physician of the Year in 2017. And he sustained a passion for sports medicine, which he cultivated as the Friars' head team physician from 1988 on. He even earned a spot in the Providence College Hall of Fame 2 years ago.

Dr. Puerini, congratulations on your well-deserved retirement. You have

shown us how to change the way health care is delivered and proven to the Nation that the triple aim of better care, lower costs, and happier and healthier patients is achievable. Thank you for everything you did to improve the care of Rhode Islanders and for the care you personally provided to so patients through the years. You made a tremendous difference.●

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Ms. Ridgway, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations which were referred to the appropriate committees.

(The messages received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 11:22 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bills, without amendment:

S. 409. An act to provide for the availability of amounts for customer education initiatives and non-awards expenses of the Commodity Futures Trading Commission Whistleblower Program, and for other purposes.

S. 1340. An act to amend title 28, United States Code, to redefine the eastern and middle judicial districts of North Carolina.

The message also announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 482. An act to amend the Public Health Service Act to reauthorize certain programs under part A of title XI of such Act relating to genetic diseases, and for other purposes.

H.R. 704. An act to amend section 708 of title 17, United States Code, to permit the Register of Copyrights to waive fees for filing an application for registration of a copyright claim in certain circumstances, and for other purposes.

H.R. 961. An act to exempt juveniles from the requirements for suits by prisoners, and for other purposes.

H.R. 1314. An act to require the Consumer Product Safety Commission to promulgate a consumer product safety rule for free-standing clothing storage units to protect children from tip-over related death or injury, and for other purposes.

H.R. 2062. An act to amend the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967 and other laws to clarify appropriate standards for Federal employment discrimination and retaliation claims, and for other purposes.

H.R. 2571. An act to include Portugal in the list of foreign states whose nationals are eligible for admission into the United States as E-1 and E-2 nonimmigrants if United States nationals are treated similarly by the Government of Portugal and to otherwise modify the eligibility criteria for E visas.